



MEDIA ADVISORY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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USS Jason Dunham XO, CMC relieved of duty

From U.S. Fleet Forces Command Public Affairs

NORFOLK, Va. – Commander, Destroyer Squadron 28 relieved the USS Jason Dunham's (DDG 109) executive officer and command master chief of their duties Dec. 20 as a result of their inappropriate responses to reports of hazing conduct, including failure to inform the commanding officer regarding the alleged hazing.

Capt. John Wade, commander, Destroyer Squadron 28, found Cmdr. Kenneth Rice, USS Jason Dunham's executive officer, and Master Chief Petty Officer Stephen Vandergriff, Dunham's command master chief, guilty at separate non-judicial punishment proceedings. NJP proceedings were initiated following a command investigation that was completed on Nov. 18.

A command investigation was initiated as the result of a hazing incident Oct. 15. The incident involved a chief petty officer who directed 19 enlisted female Sailors to remove human waste out of two nonworking toilets without sufficient proper personal protective equipment. The chief petty officer then led a group of 13 of the 19 female Sailors down the pier to dispose of the material in portable toilets.

The investigation found that Cmdr. Michael Meredith, USS Jason Dunham's commanding officer, was initially unaware of the incident but took appropriate action after being informed Oct. 21.

Other crew members assigned to USS Jason Dunham, who were involved in this incident, were also found in violation of UCMJ articles at non-judicial punishment or administratively sanctioned.

The guided-missile destroyer USS Jason Dunham is home-ported at Naval Station Norfolk. She was commissioned Nov. 13, 2010, and completed her maiden deployment to the U.S. 5th and 6th Fleet areas of responsibility Apr. 5, 2013.

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For questions related to this release, contact Lt. Cmdr. Reann Mommsen at (757) 836-4421 or (757) 416-2056.